I Claim:

Claim 1 (Withdrawn). A method for remotely shopping and ordering merchandise identified by digital barcode numbers electronically using a terminal device comprising the steps of: electronically collecting a plurality of barcode numbers with a data collection device communicatively coupled to the terminal; electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device, the shopper assistance portal maintaining information relating to a plurality of merchants and a plurality of product offered by the plurality of merchants; downloading the information relating to a plurality of merchants and a plurality of products offered by the plurality of merchants to the terminal device from the shopper assistance portal and saving the information in a memory associated with the terminal device; creating a potential order in the form of an active list of selected products from the information relating to a plurality of merchants and a plurality of products offered by the plurality of merchants saved in the memory; uploading the active list of selected products to the shopper assistance portal from the terminal device; and, electronically providing at least a first portion of the active list of selected products to at least a first merchant of the plurality of merchants for placing at least a first portion of the order.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of electronically collecting a plurality of barcode numbers with a data collection device communicatively coupled to the terminal comprises: one of scanning a barcode symbol with a barcode scanner, speaking a barcode number into a digital voice recorder, keying-in a barcode number, digitally importing a barcode number, and scanning a RFID tag number with an RFID scanner.

Claim 3 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 2 wherein the data collection device can be activated a plurality of times to build the active list.

Claim 4 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of: electronically providing a second portion of the active list of selected products to a second merchant of the plurality of merchants for placing a second portion of the order.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: displaying the plurality of products on the terminal device; electronically selecting a first product offered by a first manufacture of the plurality of products displayed; electronically requesting a comparison of other products with the first product; and, displaying similar products offered by other manufacturers to the first product.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: displaying a plurality of products on the terminal device; electronically selecting a first product offered by a first manufacture of the plurality of products displayed; electronically requesting a comparison of other products with the first product; and, displaying similar products to the first product being offered by the first manufacture.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: selecting a product displayed on the terminal device; and, providing a detailed description of the selected product from the shopper assistance portal to the terminal device.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: electronically submitting a request for a search of a product to the shopper assistance portal; and, displaying products by the shopper assistance portal responsive to the requested search to the terminal device.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the terminal device is a stand-alone device and wherein the step of electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device comprises using the stand-alone device to connect to the shopper assistance portal over the Internet.

Claim 10 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the terminal device is a personal computer and wherein the step of electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device comprises using the personal computer to connect to the shopper assistance portal over the Internet.

Claim 11 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the terminal device is a personal computer and wherein the step of electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device comprises using the personal computer to connect to the shopper assistance portal over the direct distance dial telephone network.

Claim 12 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the terminal device is a programmable web enabled cell phone and wherein the step of electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device comprises using the programmable web enabled cell phone to connect to the shopper assistance portal over the Internet.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 wherein the terminal device is a stand-alone device and wherein the step of electronically connecting to a shopper assistance portal using a terminal device comprises using the stand-alone device to connect to the shopper assistance portal over a direct distance dial telephone network.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of: providing the shopper assistance portal with a geographical location of placement of the order; and, displaying a list of merchants offering selected products in the potential order that service the location.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 14 wherein the user of the terminal device provides the shopper assistance portal with an alternative geographical location.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of: sorting the list of merchants as to the number of products each listed merchant has of the potential order.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 14 further comprising the steps of: electronically completing purchase of a selected product from a listed merchant.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of: saving the active list on the terminal device.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn). A method for electronically providing product specific advertising to a prospective purchaser comprising the steps of: electronically receiving an active list of selected products by a shopper assistance portal from a terminal device; and, electronically transmitting to the terminal device a first advertisement from a merchant associated with the shopper assistance portal responsive to at least a first product from the active list of selected products.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of: electronically transmitting to the terminal device a second advertisement from the merchant associated with the shopper assistance portal responsive to a second product from the active list of selected products.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the steps of: electronically receiving a list of products from the merchant by the shopper assistance portal; electronically receiving corresponding advertisements for the products in the list of products from the merchant by the shopper assistance portal; and, and electronically receiving corresponding URL addresses to the corresponding advertisements by the merchant to link prospective purchasers to the corresponding advertisements by the shopper assistance portal.

Claim 22 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 wherein the step of electronically transmitting to the terminal device a first advertisement from a merchant by the shopper assistance portal responsive to at least a first product from the active list of selected products comprises transmitting the first advertisement from a merchant that services the location selected by the purchaser using the terminal device.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of: searching the active list by the shopper assistance portal for products that match criteria set forth by a first merchant that services the location selected by the purchaser using the terminal device.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 23 further comprising the step of: selecting an advertisement from the first merchant for transmission to the terminal device.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 23 further comprising the step of: searching the active list by the shopper assistance portal for products that match criteria set forth by a second merchant that services a location of the purchaser using the terminal device.

Claim 26 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of: selecting an advertisement from the second merchant for transmission to the terminal device.

Claim 27 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of: receiving a transmission from the terminal device disabling the shopper assistance portal from performing the step of electronically transmitting to the terminal device at least a first advertisement from a merchant by the shopper assistance portal responsive to at least a first product from the active list of selected products.

Claim 28 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of: providing a link to a website maintained by the merchant through the first advertisement.

Claim 29 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of: electronically receiving an order for a product identified in the first advertisement from the terminal device.

Claim 30 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 26 further comprising the step of: electronically receiving an order for a product identified in the second advertisement from the terminal device.

Claim 31 (new). An impartial electronic matchmaking method that introduces buyers to sellers of products and services that can be identified by digital representations of machine-readable identification tags or symbols (MRID), where the nucleus of the system is a software application that resides on a server attached to the Internet, referred to as the Shopper Assistant Portal (SAP), working in conjunction with a

software application that can be compiled to run on any terminal-device that is capable of accessing the Internet directly or indirectly, with the users of the terminal-devices being referred to as Shoppers, and software that resides on servers that are also connected to the Internet belonging to individual Merchants of products and/or services, where the Shoppers choose the geographical area they want to shop in and the Merchants choose the geographical area they want to cater-to, comprising the steps of:

the said Shopper electronically collecting into memory storage one or a plurality of MRID numbers, in one or several sessions, that are saved into a database utilizing one or more of the established methods of data collection (barcode, punch-card, RFID, audio, and image processing) devices that can be an intricate part of the terminal-device or interfaced to the terminal-device, where multiple collections of the same ID would increment the Quantity field instead of creating a new record;

upon said Shopper's command, electronically connecting the terminal-device to the Shopper Assistant Portal, the Shopper Assistant Portal maintaining information relating to a plurality of merchants and a plurality of products and/or services offered by the plurality of merchants;

establishing an Active-List by the said Shopper selecting and uploading one of the possible pluralities of MRID databases from the terminal-device to the Shopper Assistant Portal;

software on the Shopper Assistant Portal processes the said Active-List by matching each record in the said Active-List with the associated data of each product or service, thereby updating the said Active-List with the current data that consist of at least the basic description;

downloading from the Shopper Assistant Portal the updated version of the said Active-List to the terminal-device to be examined and possibly modified by the said Shopper;

at the said Shopper's command to Shop, the said Active-List is uploaded to the Shopper Assistant Portal, where software on the Shopper Assistant Portal processes the said Active-List by matching each record in the said Active-List where the Quantity field is greater than zero, with Merchants that offer the products or services and cater-to the area determined by the said Shopper, creating a database file that contains every Merchant that caters to the said Shopper's specified area and offer one or more of the products and/or services in the said Active-List with the said database file referred to as a Merchant-List;

downloading the said Merchant-List to the terminal-device from the Shopper Assistant Portal and displaying at least the name of one Merchant in the said Merchant-List on the terminal-device to be

examined by the said Shopper, whereby the said Shopper selects one of the Merchants from the said Merchant-List, initiating software on the said Shopper's terminal-device, notifying the Shopper Assistant Portal of the said Shopper's selection;

software on the Shopper Assistant Portal processes the said Shopper's request by generating a data-package that includes among other data, the said Active-List, then electronically send the said data-package to a URL that has been specified by the selected Merchant;

software on the said selected Merchant's server processes the said data-package and establishes a session with the said Shopper, whereby the said Shopper interacts directly with said Merchant through a user interface designed and maintained by the said Merchant, whereby the said Shopper may purchase or order one or more of the products and/or services from the said Merchant utilizing a point-of-sale system specified by the said Merchant;

upon the termination of the said session between the said Shopper and the said Merchant, software on the said Merchant's server modifies the said Active-List by adjusting the Quantity field(s) in accordance with the said session, then electronically sends a data-package that includes among other data, the said modified Active-List, to the Shopper Assistant Portal, where the said Active-List is processed by software on the Shopper Assistant Portal to determine if there are any records where the Quantity field is greater than zero;

if the said Active-List contains any records where the Quantity field is greater than zero, software on the Shopper Assistant Portal processes the said Active-List by matching each record where the Quantity field is greater than zero with Merchants that offer the product or service and cater-to the area determined by the said Shopper, creating a new Merchant-List, then downloading to the said Shopper's terminal-device, the said Active-List, and the said new Merchant-List, where the said Shopper could select another Merchant, or Function that includes Quitting;

however, if the said Active-List contains no records where the Quantity field is greater than zero, the Shopper Assistant Portal will download the said Active-List and a message to be displayed on the said Shopper's terminal-device notifying the said Shopper that the said Active-List contains no records where the Quantity field is greater than zero, giving the said Shopper the option to select another Function that includes Quitting.

Claim 32 (new). When the said Shopper of Claim 31 initiates a session with more than one Merchant at a time, the Shopper Assistant Portal saves a copy of the said Active-List uniquely for each Merchant that the said Shopper is in session with.

Claim 33 (new). Merchants of products and services in Claim 31 become members of the Shopper Assistant Portal by:

agreeing to a licensing agreement;

requesting, installing and configuring software supplied by the operator of the Shopper Assistant Portal;

stating the geographical area that the merchant wants to cater-to;

 select one or more of the plurality of products and/or services that the merchant wants to offer;

establishing and specifying a URL address that the Shopper Assistant Portal shall communicate through;

uploading a data-package to the Shopper Assistant Portal that includes among other data, the offered products and/or services, cater-to area, and the URL address that the Shopper Assistant Portal shall communicate through.

Claim 34 (new). Merchants of products and services in Claim 33 may modify their list of offered products and services daily.

Claim 35 (new). Merchants of products and services in Claim 33 may modify the geographical area that they want to cater-to daily.

Claim 36 (new). Merchants of products and services in Claim 33 pay a periodic flat fee to the operator of the Shopper Assistant Portal based on the population of the area the Merchant wants to cater-to, and the number of products and services the Merchant is offering.

Claim 37 (new). Shoppers using the terminal-device in Claim 31 become members of the Shopper Assistant Portal by:

agreeing to a licensing agreement;

requesting, installing and configuring the Shopper Assistant Portal software application;

determine the geographical area to shop in;

begin using the system.

Claim 38 (new). The member Shoppers using terminal-devices in Claim 37 pay dues similar to the dues people pay periodically to brick-and-mortar shopping clubs, such as Sam's Club™ and Costco®.

Claim 39 (new). The member Shoppers using terminal-devices in Claim 37 may have several version of the Shopper Assistant Portal software application for various terminal-devices the said Shopper may have, such as a cell-phone, a personal computer, etc., with the terminal-devices collectively linked to a single membership record of the said Shopper, thereby permitting the said member Shopper to use the service with a variety of terminal-devices.

Claim 40 (new). The dues paid by the member Shoppers in Claim 38 are paid to a non-for profit agency.

Claim 41 (new). The non-for profit agency of Claim 40 would distribute one hundred percent of the net dues received from the member Shoppers to other non-for profit agencies that have an established infrastructure for feeding children.

Claim 42 (new). The other non-for profit agencies in Claim 41 receive contributions from the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 by agreeing to include the operator of the Shopper Assistant Portal in their marketing.

Claim 43 (new). The non-for profit agency of Claim 40 is responsible for:

human-resources;

oversee the penning and enforcement of licenses and agreements;

setting of policies and membership dues;

membership of Shoppers using the terminal-devices;

delivering the Shopper Assistant Portal software application to member Shoppers;

customer service;

authentication of Shoppers using the terminal-device attempting to establish a session with the Shopper Assistant Portal;

research, development, and testing of enhancements to the Shopper Assistant Portal software application that runs on the Shopper's terminal-devices based on comments and suggestions received from member Shoppers;

version control for the Shopper Assistant Portal software application for the terminal-devices;

notify the operator of the Shopper Assistance Portal and the Merchant each and every time a comment is made by a member Shoppers concerning a Merchant;

evaluate the effectiveness of the other non-for profit agencies in Claim 41 that are receiving contributions.

Claim 44 (new). The authentication of Shoppers using the terminal-device attempting to establish a session with the Shopper Assistant Portal in Claim 43, is accomplished by the steps of:

upon the initial command to establish a new session, of electronically connecting the terminal-device to the Shopper Assistance Portal, described in Claim 31 (upon said Shopper's command, electronically connecting the terminal-device to the Shopper Assistant Portal), the Shopper Assistance Portal will communicate with a server maintained by the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 electronically to validate that the said Shopper is a member in good standings;
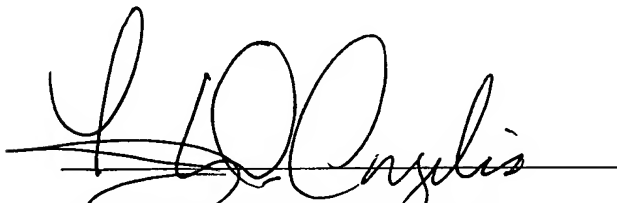
if the authentication system maintained by the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 approves the said Shopper's membership, the session continues between the said Shopper and the Shopper Assistance Portal as described in Claim 31;

if the authentication system maintained by the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 rejects the said Shopper's membership, software on the server maintained by the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 notifies the Shopper Assistance Portal, triggering software on the Shopper Assistance Portal to redirect the said Shopper using the terminal-device to a URL that the non-for profit agency of Claim 40 has established to interact with the said Shopper allowing the said Shopper to renew his or her membership as well as responding to other customer service and membership issues.

Claim 45 (new). The Merchant-List of Claim 31 can be sorted by the number (count) of products and/or services the Merchant offers that are in the said Active-List of Claim 31 as a primary sort with an alphabetical listing by Merchant name as the secondary sort, whereas if the said Active-List contains only one record, the said Merchant-List of Claim 31 will be sorted in alphabetical order by Merchant name.

Claim 46 (new). The said Shopper of Claim 31 may procure the products and/or services in the said Active-List through one or a plurality of the said Merchants in the said Merchant-List, in one or a plurality of sessions.

Claim 47 (new). The machine-readable identification tags or symbols (MRID) of Claim 31 could be the Universal Product Code (UPC barcode) that is printed on almost all of the packaged retail products worldwide.

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